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QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO COLONIAL AND OTHER DEPENDENT COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES

Written statement submitted by the Transnational Radical Party, a non-governmental organization in consultative status (category I)

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement, which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV).

[22 March 1996]

1. The systematic violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Tibet have remained a never-ending phenomenon for over the last four decades or more. The Chinese authorities continue to deny the Tibetans their rights as enshrined not only in their own "Constitution" but also in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is alarming that an increasing number of political detentions has taken place in Tibet over the past few years and that more than 10 Tibetan political prisoners have died while in custody or immediately after their release since 1987. Amnesty International has already identified 628 Tibetan political prisoners detained in Tibet at the end of 1994. Several independent reports now confirm that over 200 Tibetans were detained in 1995 by the Chinese authorities. The enforcement of the death penalty in Tibet remains another grave concern, particularly since it is used to suppress political opinion.

2. Our organization notes with deep concern the human rights situation in Tibet and China as reported by the Special Rapporteur on the question of religious intolerance (E/CN.4/1996/95), the Special Rapporteur on torture (E/CN.4/1996/35), the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions (E/CN.4/1996/4), the Special Rapporteur on violence against women (E/CN.4/1996/53), the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (E/CN.4/1996/40) and the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (E/CN.4/1996/38).

3. In 1995, the Chinese authorities have once again continued to interfere in the practice of Tibetan Buddhism, undertaking massive measures to suppress religious freedom in Tibet. The case of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the new Panchen Lama who was recognized by the Dalai Lama on 14 May 1995, is a clear example. On 13 July 1995, the Transnational Radical Party supported a resolution adopted by the European Parliament, which for the first time, took an official stand on the situation in Tibet and expressed grave concern about the disappearance of the 6-year-old Panchen Lama.

4. During the past 10 months, the Chinese authorities have failed to provide any information about the well-being and whereabouts of the Panchen Lama, causing serious tensions in and outside Tibet. What the Chinese authorities are doing is direct interference in a religious matter over which the Dalai Lama has prerogative and authority, thus making the whole issue a political one. Gedhun Choekyi Nyima is now recognized by us as the world's youngest political prisoner.

5. In the report entitled "China: No One is Safe", Amnesty International said: "In recent years, repression has intensified in rural areas [in Tibet]. Following a growth in unrest, increasing numbers of lay men and women have been arbitrarily detained. In 1994 new regulations were passed to suppress national demonstrations and as a result many monasteries and nunneries have been raided."

6. In March 1995, the Tibet Daily, an official Chinese newspaper in Tibet wrote: "We should use the weapon of the people's democratic dictatorship and, in accordance with the law, crack down without mercy on those who ... undermine the unity of nationalities and split the motherland under the cloak of religion."

7. If the civil and political rights of the Tibetan people have been violated, so have their economic, social and cultural rights. During the past 46 years, Chinese propaganda of "economic development" in Tibet has only encouraged the settlement of millions of Chinese. Benefits of internationally aided projects, including those of the United Nations, are said to have gone to Chinese settlers rather than the Tibetan people. World Food Programme project No. 3357 in the Lhasa river valley is one example. Local people who have been living for generations in the area of the project were going to be forced to evacuate their houses in order to accommodate Chinese settlers.

8. The Transnational Radical Party is of the opinion that countries that ratify United Nations conventions must ensure that the conventions are fully implemented. In this regard, we are concerned that a number of countries implement these conventions only in theory. It is also most unfortunate that

such countries repeatedly fail to submit their reports in due time, if at all. These issues should be given serious attention by competent United Nations bodies, like the Commission on Human Rights.

9. China has ratified a number of United Nations conventions, including those relating to torture, women, children and racial discrimination. However, the Chinese authorities have been repeatedly violating the above conventions, including in Tibet. Tibetan political prisoners, some as young as 12, have been detained, according to Amnesty International, which also says that Tibetan women constituted "the largest group of female political prisoners" detained by the Chinese authorities.

10. As for the rights of Tibetan women, cases of forced abortions and sterilizations in Tibet are now well documented. The Chinese authorities have issued instructions that "in order to reduce the population, use whatever means you must, but do it. With the support of the Central Committee of the Party, you should have nothing to fear." The report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women says with regard to the one-child policy, that "the Central Government of China issues ideological directives that are then implemented at the national level. One of the primary components of the policy is enforced birth control. The policy also strictly controls the age of marriage and the timing and number of children each married couple can have."

11. The Commission on Human Rights must, therefore, pay serious attention to the deteriorating situation of human rights in Tibet. If the international community wishes to ensure that the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the Tibetan people are to be protected, the Commission must then discuss the situation in Tibet as part of its agenda.

12. In conclusion, the Transnational Radical Party once again joins parliamentarians all over the world in their resolution urging China to stop immediately all policies and practices that violate the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the 6 million Tibetan people.